

WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

201 E. Washington Avenue, GEF 1, Room 400X
Madison, WI 53707

Friday, August 18, 2000

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

MINUTES

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

COMMITTEE:

Members (Present = X)

X Jennifer Noyes..... DES/AO
William B. Adams Racine County
Jon Angeli..... Southwest Consortium
X Phyllis A. Bermingham..... Marathon County
X Mary Ann Cook..... Dane County
X Rosa Dominguez OIC
Tina Koehn UMOS
James Nitz Kaiser Group
Laverne Plucinski..... Bad River Chippewa
Jewel Reichert Fond du Lac County
X Shirley Ross..... La Crosse County
Jerry Stepaniak..... MAXIMUS
Julia Taylor..... YW Works
X Michael Van Dyke..... Door County
Glynis Underwood..... ESI

Alternates (Present = X)

Jan Alft Marathon County
X Linda Brandenburg..... ESI
X Cheryl Cobb UMOSX
Doris Green..... OIC
X Deb Hughes Southwest Consortium
X Edward Kamin III..... Kenosha County
Richard L. Kammerud Polk County
X James Krivsky..... Racine County
X Barbara Metoxen..... Oneida Nation
Tom Miller La Crosse County
X Teresa Pierce..... Workforce Connections,
Inc
X Rita Renner YW Works
Sara Shackleton..... Dane County
Chris Schmitz..... Fond du Lac County

State Staff

Attendees:

Christina Martin, BFS
Rena Beyer, BWSP
Jude Morse, BDS
Rose Lynch, ASD/BITS
Jennifer Reinert, DWD/SO

Germaine Mayhew, BFS Training Section
Shawn Smith, BDS
Jan Van Vleck, DES/Acting Deputy Administrator
Barbara Harris, BFS

Guests:

Tim Cowan, YW Works
Joan Mulvey, Marquette CDHS
Jane Batha, Curtis & Associates
Kay Krenzke, ESI

Marilyn Putz, Walworth Co., Kaiser Group
Jennie Johnson, Marquette CDHS
Shane McCormick, Sheboygan CHHS

Recorder:

Stephen Dow, DES/BWSP

Welcome

Jennifer Noyes introduced Jennifer Reinert, the new DWD Executive Assistant. She also introduced Rose Lynch, recently appointed the CARES Executive Project Manager. Rose plans to attend the C&I meeting regularly.

Ms. Noyes also announced that Secretary Linda Steward plans to leave DWD September 7; her replacement has not been announced. Ms. Pierce asked if the transition to a new Secretary would complicate the signoff process for the Community Reinvestment plans. Ms. Noyes responded that that will proceed, that remaining management will assure the process continues without delay.

Minutes Approval

A motion was made by James Krivsky to approve the July, 2000 minutes and seconded by Rosa Dominguez. Motion carried.

Issue/Discussion: Best Practices Discussion

Employment Skills Advancement Program (ESAP)

DES staff requested information about use of the ESA. In response to a request for ways in which the program could be improved, members suggested:

- Reduce work hours requirement
- Increase school hours permitted
- Remove the match requirement entirely
 - Applicants seldom have any resources to make the match
 - The Pell Grant Program generally won't work because of the number of school hours required to be eligible for Pell.
- Changes that will better permit educational participation while working
 - The availability of the tech school schedule is a primary concern

Ms. Hughes suggested using ESAP for the unemployed and the WAA funds for the employed.

Ms. Van Vleck asked if the amount of the ESAP grant is sufficient; members agreed that an increase could be of assistance. Ms. Cook mentioned that the present amount seems best targeted to very specific skills training. Several members noted that they work with the tech schools to put together classes on specific needs and are able to do some cost control that way. Mr. Kamin said they try to target those persons who just need to get back into the school stream; for some, that may be the biggest hurdle to furthering their education. Ms. Renner noted that transportation can sometimes make or break the school plan.

Mr. Kamin reported that some of his staff attending the WAA training believe they were told that dual enrollment in WAA and W-2 is permitted; Mr. Kamin understood that WAA funds can not be used to supplant W-2 dollars and that dual enrollment wouldn't be possible. Immediate response from DES staff was that there may be confusion over "supplanting" and "enhancing"; the WAA dollars are not to supplant W-2 dollars, but can enhance the W-2. That would permit dual participation.

Community Reinvestment

A short discussion then followed about tracking in Community Reinvestment (CR). Ms. Ross was concerned with TANF "assistance" in CR. Members were told of the progress of the CR Operations Memo draft; Ms. Ross asked that it include clarification of the 4 months issue (sequential, cumulative, etc.). Members also agreed that the 10% cap on group services be lifted to permit increased local flexibility in use of the funds to meet local needs.

Issue/Discussion: Performance Standards Workgroup Update

The Workgroup's interim report was distributed. Ms. Renner said the report follows the group's recent meeting in Milwaukee along with additional comments submitted by Dane County staff. The Workgroup requested members review the report and come to the September meeting with comments and prepared to discuss. This issue is a growing concern statewide, particularly "entered employment".

Ms. Cook asked if the CARES-errors ("typos", misunderstandings, etc.) would be reflected in the performance standards measurement; additionally, what is the impact of bad data in the past. Ms. Noyes responded that this is a separate issue, not on the Workgroup's list, but one that does concern DES and one we are trying to account for; and, for bad past data, the focus is really on the future, not the past—our concern is prospective.

Ms. Renner asked members to get comments on the interim report to Tim Cowan by the end of the following week. Ms. Hughes asked Ms. Noyes if this Workgroup's output would be seriously considered by DES; Ms. Noyes responded that it certainly will be, that it is viewed as valuable input.

Ms. Hughes expressed her appreciation for Ms. Noyes attention and openness in dealing with the group's concerns with performance standards and measurement.

Issue/Discussion: Season Farm Labor Impact (Jennie Johnson, Marquette County)

Ms. Johnson described Marquette County's concern with seasonal farm labor and its effect on small agencies and performance standards. Marquette has, on average, 8 cases per month, almost all FSET. In the summer months, as many as 43% of the caseload are migrant farm workers. Generally, these are "easy" cases as they are eager to work and easily employed, showing as successful entered employments. However, most do not have health insurance, a negative to the performance standards. Additionally, the 180-day follow-up usually finds the family out of Wisconsin, returned (frequently) to Texas; if the agency can establish contact, the family is usually found to be unemployed and receiving unemployment insurance. In summary: although the agency looks good on (1) entered employment, it looks bad on (2) medical benefits from employment and (3) 180-day follow-up.

Ms. Johnson reported that Lynn Schmitt, DES, asked the agency to maintain a listing of such cases, but agency was not aware of why or what the purpose of the list would be. Mr. Saeman mentioned that we do not track these cases in other ways; the "migrant" coding in CARES is used for persons entering the state with an employment contract, but the cases type Marquette is concerned with are those without such contracts. The Marquette cases are more accurately referred to as "seasonal farm worker", not "migrant worker".

Mr. Van Dyke and others confirmed that Door County, the Wisconsin Dells, and other areas have the same issue. Ms. Ross mentioned that the 180-day follow-up is frequently a problem for those in homeless shelters, as they frequently are not in the shelter or traceable at the 180-day cycle.

Ms. Dominguez commented that the Migrant Labor Council might be of assistance in tracing former recipients; UMOS also might be of assistance in that it has a contract with WtW to do this. However, Ms. Johnson responded that, even if the former recipients are found, they may well not be employed meaning that the impact on the performance standards remains the same.

Mr. Kamin proposed that the performance standard should be linked to whether the person(s) are still in the community wherein they received the W-2; that is, the W-2 agency still has some "control" over the follow-up. Ms. Noyes asked how we would define "under control"; Mr. Kamin said he had no immediate solution, but felt such a definition could certainly be formed.

Mr. Van Dyke proposed that one solution might be that, where the 180-day follow-up was not possible, that any credit for entered employment and/or medical benefits credit be removed for that case. Ms. Ross supported this suggestion. Mr. Kamin mentioned that he understood this position, wasn't against it, but the primary issue is removing the 180-day penalty.

Ms. Renner requested Ms. Johnson forward her material to Ms. Renner so it could be included in the Performance Standards Workgroup report.

Issue/Discussion: TANF Reauthorization (Deb Hughes)

Ms. Hughes requested, in preparation for the federal TANF reauthorization debate next year, that a workgroup be formed from this Committee with the purpose of maintaining the TANF appropriations. She felt this was crucial:

- as our 60-month clock expirations will begin October, 2001, not 2002 (was will most other states)
- to provide timely feedback to Wisconsin authorities on this issue.

Ms. Bermingham reported that the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families recently met; a speaker there from Chicago was attempting to initiate a coalition in the Midwest to deal with these same issues.

Ms. Noyes reported that the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) has started a group working on TANF reauthorization issues; that Dianne Reynolds, DES, would be attending their meeting in mid-September and that Ms. Noyes would be attending an APHSA meeting in December of state CEOs on the same issue. In addition, APHSA is working with the National Governor's Association (NGA) to coordinate their efforts in this regard. Wisconsin has been working with peer groups in other states, as well. This issue has the attention of the Governor's office and is a major item in the DES work plan. DES has initiated a workgroup, now meeting bi-weekly, to collect needed data and work on this issue; C&I will be kept apprised of this group's work; Ms. Noyes suggested we have this as a standing C&I Committee agenda item as a way to keep members alerted. Ms. Hughes volunteered to participate in that effort any way she is able.

Issue/Discussion: Contingency Funds (Continued from July Meeting)

Mr. Kamin asked who it is that determines "crisis beyond the control of the agency"? Ms. Morse responded that it is DWD that will make that decision; that decision, if positive, would be communicated to the Joint Finance Committee as a request for the funds. Ms. Van Vleck said the Joint Finance Committee's decision could be a "passive review".

Members asked if there was any danger the Contingency Funds account would revert to the federal government. Ms. Noyes responded that that would not happen. However, although the dollars are identified as the Contingency Fund, the legislature is able to reallocate the dollars. The impact at the federal level is likely to come when TANF reauthorization is considered; that is, what is the true need for reauthorization when TANF dollars are not spent? The complications and intricacies of TANF funding may be oversimplified in the media, making the TANF reauthorization issues more clouded.

Ms. Morse noted that DWD's determination of "crisis" will not be easy; we can see from benefit expenditures projection comparisons, but we can not see the other factors of contingency circumstances. Agencies need to keep DES alert to their experiences.

Ms. Hughes asked whether the values of the sanction withholdings are fixed or actual. Ms. Morse responded that they are actual values within DWD; but, the legislature assumes a statewide amount. Mr. Van Dyke asked if this was a specific line item; Ms. Morse answered it was.

Issue/Discussion: 60-Month Time Limit Subcommittee (Mary Ann Cook)

Ms. Cook reported the group has been active, they were getting feedback and a final report would be given at the September C&I meeting. Anyone with comments or suggestions for the group should contact Ms. Cook by August 31.

Mr. Kamin suggested serious consideration be made toward creating another tier for those who are likely to be repeatedly extended beyond the clock's limit. Ms. Cook explained that the subcommittee's position is that there are goals other than competitive employment in W-2.

A major concern of the subcommittee is that the 60-month clock will first expire 3 months before the existing W-2 contract ends; this timing may create serious issues with many agencies.

Mr. Saeman said he would provide copies of the federal reporting materials to the subcommittee for its use.

Issue/Discussion: October Meeting

Traditionally (short as it may be), this group has met in October in beautiful Door County (as opposed to beautiful Dane County). Discussion was held about continuing this tradition in 2000; also discussed was meeting there in November, meeting in one of the many other beautiful Wisconsin counties with members on this committee. No decision was made.

Issue/Discussion: September Meeting

Mr. Van Dyke noted that the September meeting is scheduled for the 15th; this comes sooner than the regular time period between meeting. The group agreed to move the meeting from the 15th to the 22nd of September. A new meeting room will have to be found and communicated to the group.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly 24-Month Extension Report

The report was distributed without discussion.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly CARES Update Report, Tim Hinline, DES/BWSP/CARES Section

The report was distributed without discussion.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly Training Update Report, Gerry Mayhew, DES/BFS/Training Section

The report was distributed without discussion.

Issue/Discussion: OTHER –

Office 50/55 Contract Issues

Ms. Pierce asked about current status of the issue. Ms. Morse responded that the DES workgroup was close to releasing its product; Paul Saeman is reviewing. The analysis is not confined to the way the contract now identifies the case types. The

group is trying to deal with the reality of where the case is actually assigned. Some important concerns were: (1) how much is done in a combined agency; (2) how is it done for separate (ES/W-2) agencies.

Ms. Pierce asked about the workgroup product's affect on the BadgerCare and FamilyCare funding. Ms. Morse reported DES is reviewing the impact of funding at the ES agency but work being done at the W-2 agency; no recommendation or decision has been made yet.

Contingency Fund Subcommittee

There was discussion about re-starting the C&I Contingency Fund Subcommittee. Members agreed such a group should be activated. Chair is Mr. Kamin; members are Ms. Pierce, Ms. Hughes, and Ms. Cobb.

NEXT MEETING DATE: **September 22, 2000** **(Change from September 15, 2000)**
 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Location to be announced.]

Madison, WI 53707